

attachment means for attaching or detaching the second housing from the first housing by a user without employing a tool;

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at least one key unit for user-actuation of at least one key sensor, and retaining means comprising a cover, for holding electronic components of the radiotelephone, including said key sensor but excluding said key unit to the first housing when the second housing is released from attachment with the first housing, said key unit being free to move with respect to the first and second housings when the second housing is released from attachment with the first housing.

B2 18. A handheld radio communication device having electronic components connected to a carrier plate comprising:

a housing substantially enclosing the electronic components connected to the carrier plate, the housing including openings for control elements for the electronic components, the housing protecting the electronic components from access by a user of the device, the housing being adapted to receive a detachable external wall element and said housing having a base portion which projects beyond the side walls of the housing and on to which the external wall element can be fitted with its free edge opposing the base portion which projects beyond the side walls, the housing further including a plurality of housing walls, including first, second and third housing walls, the first housing wall having the openings arranged to receive the control elements for the electronic components, the external wall element at least partially covering the first, second and third housing walls and an attachment means having formations for detachably connecting to the exterior of the housing the external wall element;

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a detachable external wall element adapted to overlies a portion of the housing, the external wall element being sized and shaped to at least partially cover the housing upon attachment thereto, the external wall element having a face portion with openings corresponding to the housing openings for the control elements, which the face portion will overlies upon attachment of the external wall element to the housing, each of the external wall element openings for the control elements being uncovered and exposed for use after attachment of the external wall element to the housing, the profile of the external wall element corresponding to the profile of the first, second and third housing walls;

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each of the housing and the external wall element having at least one wall to create shell shaped configurations, so that when the face of the external wall element overlies the portion of the housing, the at least one wall of the external wall element overlies the at least one wall of the housing, the shell shaped configuration of the external wall element and the shell shaped configuration of the housing correspond so that the external wall element is adapted to fit over the housing with the housing nested within the external wall element;

the attachment means being formed cooperatively on each of the at least one wall of the housing and the at least one wall of the external wall element for detachably connecting to the housing the external wall element, comprising a snap-in-place releasable connection; and

at least one key unit for user-actuation of at least one key sensor held by said housing, said key unit being held in place over said key sensor by said external wall element so that when said external wall element is released from attachment with the housing, said key unit is free to move with respect to the housing.

19. A handheld radio communication device having electronic components connected to a carrier plate comprising:

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a housing substantially enclosing the electronic components connected to the carrier plate, the housing including openings for control elements for the electronic components, the housing protecting the electronic components from access by a user of the device, the housing being adapted to receive a detachable external wall element and said housing having a base portion which projects beyond the side walls of the housing and on to which the external wall element can be fitted with its free edge opposing the base portion which projects beyond the side walls, the housing further including a plurality of housing walls, including first, second and third housing walls, the first housing wall having the openings arranged to receive the control elements for the electronic components, the external wall element at least partially covering the first, second and third housing walls and an attachment means having formations for detachably connecting to the exterior of the housing the external wall element;

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a detachable external wall element adapted to overlie a portion of the housing, the external wall element being sized and shaped to at least partially cover the housing upon attachment thereto, the external wall element having a face portion with openings corresponding to the housing openings for the control elements, which the face portion will overlie upon attachment of the external wall element to the housing, each of the external wall element openings for the control elements being uncovered and exposed for use after attachment of the external wall element to the housing, the profile of the external wall element corresponding to the profile of the first, second and third housing walls;

each of the housing and the external wall element having at least one wall to create shell shaped configurations, so that when the face of the external wall element overlies the portion of the housing, the at least one wall of the

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external wall element overlies the at least one wall of the housing, the shell shaped configuration of the external wall element and the shell shaped configuration of the housing correspond so that the external wall element is adapted to fit over the housing with the housing nested within the external wall element;

the attachment means being formed cooperatively on each of the at least one wall of the housing and the at least one wall of the external wall element for detachably connecting to the housing the external wall element, said attachment means comprising a press-on/catch closure; and

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at least one key unit for user-actuation of at least one key sensor held by said housing, said key unit being held in place over said key sensor by said external wall element so that when said external wall element is released from attachment with the housing, said key unit is free to move with respect to the housing.

20. A handheld radio communication device comprising a cordless telephone as a mobile telephone having electronic components connected to a carrier plate comprising:

a housing substantially enclosing the electronic components connected to the carrier plate, the housing including openings for control elements for the electronic components, the housing protecting the electronic components from access by a user of the device, the housing being adapted to receive a detachable external wall element and said housing having a base portion which projects beyond the side walls of the housing and on to which the external wall element can be fitted with its free edge opposing the base portion which projects beyond the side walls, the housing further including a plurality of housing walls, including first, second and third housing walls, the first housing wall having the openings arranged to receive the control elements for

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the electronic components, the external wall element at least partially covering the first, second and third housing walls and an attachment means having formations for detachably connecting to the exterior of the housing the external wall element;

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a detachable external wall element adapted to overlie a portion of the housing, the external wall element being sized and shaped to at least partially cover the housing upon attachment thereto, the external wall element having a face portion with openings corresponding to the housing openings for the control elements, which the face portion will overlie upon attachment of the external wall element to the housing, each of the external wall element openings for the control elements being uncovered and exposed for use after attachment of the external wall element to the housing, the profile of the external wall element corresponding to the profile of the first, second and third housing walls; and

each of the housing and the external wall element having at least one wall to create shell shaped configurations, so that when the face of the external wall element overlies the portion of the housing, the at least one wall of the external wall element overlies the at least one wall of the housing; and the shell shaped configuration of the external wall element and the shell shaped configuration of the housing correspond so that the external wall element is adapted to fit over the housing with the housing nested within the external wall element;

the attachment means being formed cooperatively on each of the at least one wall of the housing and the at least one wall of the external wall element for detachably connecting to the housing the external wall element, comprising a snap-in-place releasable connection; and

at least one key unit for user-actuation of at least one key sensor held by said housing, said key unit being held in place over said key sensor by said

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external wall element so that when said external wall element is released from attachment with the housing, said key unit is free to move with respect to the housing.

21. A hand held communication device comprising:

at least one element for input by a user and at least one element for output to the user, each one of said elements being sufficiently exposed to allow use by a user;

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a housing having a housing wall with openings therethrough, comprising openings for the at least one element for input by the user and the at least one element for output to the user;

a user attachable/detachable external non-planar cover attached to and at least partially covering the housing wherein the detachability provides for user interchange with another non-planar cover thereby facilitating user modification of the external appearance of the hand held communications device, the external non-planar cover being adapted to fit over the housing with the housing partially nested within the external non-planar cover, the cover comprising a main face having an upper surface which is exposed when the cover is attached to the housing and a side wall extending downwards, away from the upper surface of the main face, the main face of the cover and at least portions of the side wall of the cover defining a cavity sized to receive a portion of the housing when attached thereto, the cover having said plurality of apertures therethrough to the cavity positioned over and aligned with openings in the housing including the opening for the at least one element for input by the user and the opening for the at least one element for output to the user, whereby each one of said input and output elements is sufficiently exposed to allow use by a user;

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at least one user releasable retainer, holding the cover to the housing, formed by contact between the housing and the downwardly extending side wall of the cover, said retainer being releasable by the user without employing a tool, wherein the hand held device is fully functional when the cover is attached;

and wherein at least portions of the side wall of the external, non-planar cover terminate at a free, downwardly pointing edge and the housing has, where the housing nests within the external non-planar cover, upwardly facing ledge-like portions which project beyond the side wall of the housing, whereby the free downwardly pointing edge portions of the external non-planar cover oppose the projecting, upwardly facing ledge-like portions of the housing and substantially follow the contours of the projecting ledge-like portions; and

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at least one key unit for user-actuation of at least one key sensor held by said housing, said key unit being held in place over said key sensor by said cover so that when said cover is released from attachment with the housing, said key unit is free to move with respect to the housing.

22. A hand held communication device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the width of the side wall of the external element at the free edge substantially equals the width of the ledge-like portion it opposes, whereby substantially no ledge remains in the connection area between the cover and the housing.

23. A hand held communication device as claimed in Claim 22, wherein the profile of the external non-planar cover follows the profile of the housing wall of the housing.

24. A hand held communication device as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the height of the side walls of the external non-planar cover are such that the main face of the external non-planar cover comes to rest at a distance from the housing wall and does not exert any pressure thereon.